

From: Andrew Blake [<mailto:aonb.officer@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk>]
Sent: 20 April 2017 11:26
To: Thomas, Edward
Subject: RE: 163707 - Mill Field, Fownhope

Dear Mr Thomas

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the revised plans. We note the amended landscape assessment that has been submitted to support this application. It considers various viewpoints (both short and long-distance). It is inevitable that this development will be visible in the landscape. However, we recognise that the site has been allocated for housing, albeit less than proposed in this application. It remains for the Council to determine whether this constitutes major development under Section 116 of the NPPF. The principle issue is the scale and density of development and the sensitivity of the design in the context of the local landscape character.

We acknowledge the modifications to the site design, layout and landscaping and the use of house designs and colours which reflect the vernacular architecture. The Design & Access Statement states "Sustainable Development are specifically addressed by the submitted and updated Landscape Character and Visual Analysis, Landscape Report and Landscape Management Plan". However there appears to be no references to the sustainability criteria of the Neighbourhood Plan Policy FW16: b) "Utilising physical sustainability measures associated with buildings that include, in particular, orientation of buildings, the provision of energy and water conservation measures, cycle and recycling storage... and renewable energy infrastructure such as photovoltaic panels". We believe the housing layout and designs should be modified further to make the buildings more sustainable in energy use without losing their vernacular reference. We would also welcome further assurances that the detail of the type and colour of materials would not be diluted subsequent to any approval of the development. Of particular concern are the types and colours of stonework, brickwork and rendered walls of the prominent two storey houses. This will be crucial to ensure this development blends into its wider setting (for example, as in View 17 and 38).

The proposal includes traditional orchard planting. This will help to soften the edge of the development and will be an enhancement to the local area and this prominent 'gateway' to the village. However, there does not appear to be any information about how this will be managed neither as grassland nor as orchard. A viable and sustainably resourced management plan is required. We also consider that there should be a condition on protection of this orchard to ensure that the settlement boundary is not extended further in a north-westerly direction, as there will be no coherent link to any further development. We would also suggest that front gardens are protected by conditions and trees on the site are protected through Tree Preservation Orders.

Finally, we are concerned that there is no assessment of how lighting will affect the views at dawn/dusk and night time. This should be considered as part of this application and any lighting should be minimised and controlled by appropriate conditions.

If the Council are minded to approve this application in the AONB then we would expect the above observations to be taken into account, to ensure that the development is as sustainable as possible with the minimum detrimental impact on the Wye Valley AONB.

Your sincerely

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The UK's protected landscapes include 46 AONBs and 15 National Parks.

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